



1. Josephus Flavius (1st century CE), Antiquities of the Jews VIII 2:5 (Whiston translation)

G-d also enabled him [Solomon] to learn that skill which expels demons, which is a science useful and sanative to men. He composed such incantations also by which distempers are alleviated. And he left behind him the manner of using exorcisms, by which they drive away demons, so that they never return; and this method of cure is of great force unto this day; for I have seen a certain man of my own country, whose name was Eleazar, releasing people that were demoniacal in the presence of Vespasian, and his sons, and his captains, and the whole multitude of his soldiers...

Alternative Ending 1: Limbo/Possession

2. Rabbi David ibn Avi Zimra (1479-1573, Spain and Israel), Responsum 8:87 (underline added)

Question: The following midrash is hard for us to understand: "The souls of the righteous and the souls of the wicked alike return, descend and are buffeted about in the world, as it is written, 'And may the souls of your enemies be slung in the bowl of the sling.'" This is the opposite of our tradition! Further, the proof brought applies to the wicked one's soul – why should the righteous one's soul be buffeted about? What is his source?

Answer: Indeed, we find that Rabbi Eliezer [Shabbat 152b] said the opposite: "The souls of the righteous are stored under the Divine Throne, as it is written, 'May my master's soul be bound in the bond of life,' and the souls of the wicked are buffeted below, as it is written, 'And may the souls of your enemies, etc.'" However, know that there are righteous people who receive as do the wicked in this matter... such as those who stumbled in a sin which mandates reincarnation until they fulfill the Divine will, according to His justice. Thus it is written (Samuel II 14:14), 'He devises plans, lest anyone be pushed away.'

Thus that midrash said that both the souls of the righteous which need this, and the souls of the wicked, return, descend and are buffeted about in the world, hinting at what we have said...

3. Rabbi Judah Loew (Maharal, 1520-1609, Prague), Comments to Shabbat 152b

The wicked person goes to extremes in his deeds, the opposite of a righteous person who does not stray from the straight path and the middle point. Therefore, a *malach* stands at one end of the world and another at the other end, just as he went from one extreme to the other; there are two extremes. So he has no rest, for as you will know and understand with deep wisdom, the extreme has no rest. Therefore, the *malach* who stands at one end does not accept him, for he is associated with the extreme... and so he slings him to the second extreme...

4. Abstract of http://www.academia.edu/283212/Demons_In_Ancient_Egypt

While much has been written on the topic of deities and the dead in Ancient Egypt, the systematic study of demons has only recently come to the fore of scholarly studies. Preliminary typologies based on surviving spells, prescriptions, and apotropaic devices suggests the theory that these hostile entities were divided into sub-types in the Egyptian worldview, distinguished from each other by the specific illnesses and conditions they caused, and as well as by the prescribed means of repulsion and protection...

5. Dybbuk – דַּבְּבִיק

6. Rabbi Yaakov Chaim Sofer (1870-1939, Baghdad and Israel), Kaf haChaim, Orach Chaim 46:32

It is also possible to explain that during one's lifetime, one might become 'pregnant' with one of these... Each night, one's soul gives an accounting before its Creator, and is judged for its deeds. Sometimes they will give it another soul, in the 'secret of pregnancy'.

Alternative Ending 2: Reincarnation

7. Corey Kilgannon, *Skeptics can carp, but a New York fish is the talk of the town*, NY Times, 3/15/03

NEW SQUARE, N.Y. - And so it came to pass that a talking carp, shouting in Hebrew, shattered the calm of the New Square Fish Market and created what many here are calling a miracle. Of course, others are calling it a Purim trick, a loopy tale worthy of Isaac Bashevis Singer or just a whopping fish story concocted by a couple of meshugenehs.

Whatever one calls it, the tale of the talking fish has spread in recent weeks throughout this tight-knit community populated by about 7,000 members of the Skver sect of Hasidim, and throughout the Hasidic world, inspiring heated debate, talmudic discussions and derisive jokes...

Here then is the story, according to the two men, the only witnesses.

Rosen, whose family owns the store, and Nivelov, who has worked at the shop for seven years, say that on Jan. 28 at 4 p.m. they were carving up carp. Nivelov, who is not Jewish, lifted a live carp out of a box of iced-down fish and was about to club it in the head with a rubber hammer.

But the fish began speaking in Hebrew, according to the two men. Nivelov does not understand Hebrew, but the shock of a fish speaking any language, he said, forced him against the wall and down to the slimy wooden packing crates that cover the floor.

He looked around to see if the voice had come from the slop sink, the other room or the shop's cat. Then he ran into the front of the store screaming, "The fish is talking!" and pulled Rosen away from the phone.

"I screamed, 'It's the devil! The devil is here!'" he recalled. "But Zalmen said to me, 'You crazy, you a meshugeneh.'" But Rosen said that when he approached the fish he heard it uttering warnings and commands in Hebrew. "It said 'Tzaruch shemirah' and 'Hasof bah,'" he said, "which essentially means that everyone needs to account for themselves because the end is near."

The fish commanded Rosen to pray and to study the Torah and identified itself as the soul of a local Hasidic man who died last year, childless. The man often bought carp at the shop for the Sabbath meals of poorer village residents.

Rosen panicked and tried to kill the fish with a machete-size knife. But the fish bucked so wildly that Rosen wound up cutting his own thumb and was taken to the hospital by ambulance.

The fish flopped off the counter and back into the carp box and was butchered by Nivelov and sold. The story has been told and retold, and many Jews believe that the talking fish was a rare shimmer of Gd's spirit. Some call it a warning about the dangers of the impending war in Iraq.

8. Deuteronomy 25:6

The firstborn child to whom she will give birth will stand on the name of the deceased brother, and his name will not be erased from Israel.

9. Zohar, Genesis page 92a

The son *is* the deceased man, whose soul has returned to this world.

10. Deuteronomy 33:6

May Reuven live and not die...

11. Job 33:29

Gd will perform all of these twice, three times with a man.

12. Rabbi Eliezer Papo (18th-19th century Turkey), *Pele Yoetz* "Gilgul"

Through belief in reincarnation one will also know that Gd's justice is true. Gd's deeds are perfect, for all of His ways are just. One will not complain about Gd's actions, as some fools do when they suffer.

13. Rabbi Saadia Gaon (10th century Babylon), *Emunot v'Deiot* 6:8

In their minds, this means that Reuven's spirit enters Shimon, and then Levi, and then Yehudah. Some, perhaps most of them, believe that a human soul may enter an animal, or an animal enter a human. The types of foolishness and confusion are legion.

14. Rabbi Yosef Albo (14th-15th century Spain), *Sefer halkkarim* 4:29

[W]hy should that soul, having served in a body and having experienced free will, need to return to a body?

15. Rabbi Eliezer Papo (18th - 19th century Turkey), *Pele Yoetz* "Gilgul"

The suffering of reincarnation is worse than death, and worse than all of the punishments of Gehennom, as the soul is reincarnated through the hierarchy of Silent, Growing, Living and Speaking.

16. Zohar, Genesis page 131a

The last body in which the soul was planted, and in which it grew successfully and developed good roots, will rise up at that time.

Awareness in the Afterlife?

17. Job 14:21-22

His children will be honoured and he will not know; they will be in pain, and he will not understand. Only his own flesh will feel pain, and his spirit will grieve for himself.

18. Ecclesiastes 9:5

For the living know they will die, and the dead know nothing...

19. Talmud, Berachot 18a-b

One who guards a dead body – even if it is not his responsibility – is exempt from Shema, the amidah and tefillin, and all biblical mitzvot...

One who transports bones may not put them in a sack or on a donkey and ride on them, for that would disgrace them... Anyone who sees a dead body and does not escort it violates "One who mocks a pauper blasphemes against his Creator. (Proverbs 17:5)" And if he escorts him, what is his reward? Rav Asi said: Regarding him the text says, "One is a creditor of Gd, who aids the indigent," and "And one honours Him, who aids the needy."

Rabbi Chiya and Rabbi Yonatan were in discussion as they walked in a cemetery, and Rabbi Yonatan's *tzitzit* were out. Rabbi Chiya said to him: Pick it up, lest they say, 'Tomorrow he will come to us, and now he mocks us?' Rabbi Yonatan replied: Do they know that much? Doesn't Ecclesiastes 9:5 say, "And the dead know nothing"! He responded: If you have read, you have not read twice; if you have read twice, you have not read thrice; if you have read thrice, they have not explained it to you. "For the living know they will die" are the righteous, who are called 'living' even in death... "And the dead know nothing" are the wicked, who are called 'dead' even in life...

The sons of Rabbi Chiya travelled among the villages, and their learning became difficult for them. They laboured in pain to remember it. One of them said to the other: Does our [deceased] father know of this pain? The other replied: How would he know? Job 14:21 says, "His sons will be honoured and he will not know!" The other replied: Doesn't he know? Job 14:22 says, "His flesh will pain him, and his soul will mourn for itself!"...

20. Talmud, Shabbat 152a-b

Rav Chisda said: A person's soul mourns for himself for seven days, as it is written, 'His soul will be *ave*/for himself,' and it is also written, 'And he performed, for his father, a seven day *eivel*.'

Rav Yehudah said: If there are no people to be comforted after a person's death, then ten men go sit in his place. There was such a case in Rav Yehudah's neighborhood, and each day Rav Yehudah brought a group of ten and they sat in his place. After seven days, the deceased appeared in a dream of Rav Yehudah and said to him, "May your mind rest, for you caused rest for my mind."

Rabbi Avahu said: The deceased knows all that is said in its presence, until the grave is closed...

21. Talmud, Bava Batra 154a

The following once happened in Bnei Brak: A male sold his father's property, and later died. Family members later objected that he had been a minor at the time of his death [and therefore at the time of the sale, which would invalidate the sale].

They asked Rabbi Akiva about examining the body. Rabbi Akiva replied: "You are not permitted to degrade his body. Further, signs of puberty change after death."